



A Business Survival Preparedness Kit

Together We Can Take Action to Learn About Pandemic Flu



TOGETHER WE CAN

DEAR BUSINESS OWNER:

The businesses in our community provide vital support to the District and the region as a whole. The health and vitality of your employees is as important to us as it is to you, and we want to ensure that you are in the best position possible to maintain the wellness of those who work for you. During a severe flu outbreak like a pandemic, you will play a key role in protecting your employees' health and safety as well as limiting the negative impact to the economy that a serious disease outbreak can have. Planning for pandemic influenza is critical. One of the most important ways to help prepare and protect your business is to have a comprehensive all-hazards emergency plan that has a pandemic flu component to it. Your staff's awareness of the plan, and the manner in which you communicate it to them, will serve as reassurance that you care about their health, and that you value them as team members.

What You Need to Know

A pandemic is a global disease outbreak, and a flu pandemic occurs when a new influenza virus emerges for which people have little or no immunity, and for which there is no vaccine. This is what happened this Spring with the H1N1 virus (formerly known as "swine flu"). The disease spreads easily from person-to-person via respiratory droplets emitted when coughing, sneezing, or contact with contaminated hands, tissues, and commonly touched surfaces. H1N1 can cause serious illness in some people, however, for the most part, people in the United States suffered moderate illness. This is the kind of virus that has the potential to sweep across the country and around the world in a very short time which is why H1N1 was able to affect countries all around the world.

Take Action to Prepare

The most important action that your company can take is to **plan now**. The District of Columbia Department of Health, Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Administration (HEPRA) has developed this survival toolkit for local businesses to incorporate into their own business practices so they can participate and assist in the overall comprehensive preparedness plan for the District of Columbia. The toolkit provides the following:

- Information about pandemic flu
- Infection prevention information and techniques for your employees.
- Local resources and materials to help your company educate employees about the pandemic flu and prevention guidelines (i.e., poster, pocket book consumer brochure, wallet card, calendar)
- Ways to maintain your business operations in the face of high absenteeism during an outbreak

A comprehensive all-hazards emergency plan that has a pandemic flu component to it is an important part of keeping your business healthy. We thank you for joining other business leaders in the District of Columbia in taking steps to ensure the health and safety of employees, residents, and visitors within our community.

Sincerely,



Pierre Vigilance M.D., MPH

Director

District of Columbia Department of Health



KNOW THE FACTS

What is pandemic flu?

A pandemic flu describes a disease that affects the whole world, is transmitted person to person, and may overwhelm the healthcare system to respond to those who are sick. Serious symptoms can develop, even with people who are strong and healthy.

What is the difference between seasonal flu and pandemic flu?

- Usually some immunity is built up from previous exposure to seasonal flu; whereas there is no or little exposure to the pandemic flu.
- Seasonal flu may put healthy adults at risk for serious complications; whereas pandemic flu may put healthy adults at increased risk for serious complications or even death.
- Seasonal flu symptoms include: fever, cough, runny nose, muscle pain, and complications such as pneumonia; whereas novel viruses in a pandemic flu may be more severe and lead to complications that may be more severe.
- Both seasonal and pandemic flu are transmitted person-to-person through the air or on surfaces.
- Vaccines are available for seasonal flu, whereas, vaccines for pandemic flu may take months to develop.

How is flu transmitted?

Infected people can transmit the virus through the air, and when they cough or sneeze into their hands virus particles may stick and survive on any surface they touch.



Symptoms of the Flu

- Fever higher than 100.4° F
- Cough
- Stuffy or runny nose
- Exhaustion or weakness
- Vomiting
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Muscles aches
- Diarrhea



TOGETHER WE CAN

Stay Healthy

PROTECTING EMPLOYEES AND FAMILIES TO HELP PROTECT YOUR BUSINESS

Take common-sense steps to limit the spread of germs and the flu virus. Make good hygiene a habit with your employees. Place posters and messages in restrooms and well trafficked locations to include:

- **Wash hands** frequently with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- **Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- **Put used tissues** in a waste basket.
- **Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve** if you do not have a tissue.
- **Wash your hands** after coughing or sneezing.
- **Stay at home** if you are sick.
- **Ensure that the ill employee stays home for at least 24 hours after fever is gone**, except to seek medical care or for other necessities. (Fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)



Encourage annual flu vaccination for employees

Wash your hands with soap and warm water after coughing or sneezing



Clean with alcohol-based hand cleaner



Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands



And do not forget to wipe clean and **sanitize all surfaces!**

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze



Put your used tissue in the waste basket



TOGETHER WE CAN

Stay Prepared

WHY YOUR BUSINESS IS VITAL TO OUR CITY

During a pandemic flu, businesses will play a key role in protecting employees' health and safety as well as limiting the negative impact to the District's economy and society. Planning for pandemic flu is critical. As with any catastrophe, having a contingency plan is essential.

To assist you in your efforts, the District of Columbia's Department of Health has developed this guide to identify important, specific activities businesses can do **now** to prepare for a pandemic, and other emergencies. Further information can be found at www.flu.gov, www.doh.dc.gov/flu and www.cdc.gov/business.

Determine the impact of a pandemic on company financials using multiple possible scenarios that affect your business. What would a 20% or 40% cut in personnel and supplies look like?

Essential Operating Issues to Consider

- Maintaining essential operations and services if 40 percent or more of all workers are out sick, forced to stay home, or choose to stay home to avoid exposure.
- Maintaining essential operations and services when pandemic flu outbreaks last six to eight weeks.
- Developing a back up plan to support the loss of essential workers.



DEVELOP A PANDEMIC CONTINUITY BUSINESS PLAN

When you do not know all the variables, but the risk is extreme, the lesson becomes: **Plan for it all.** Business continuity plans have integrated most of the known disaster scenarios, but until recently may not have included a pandemic flu plan.

Take Action Ideas to Ensure Continuity

- Ensure adequate visibility of their entire essential supply and delivery chain in order to uncover potential impacts on second-order and third-order manufacturers and suppliers.
- Define the triggers for supply scarcity that may affect a portion or all of the functions of a business.
- Ensure all essential business partners in the supply chain are equally well prepared for a pandemic.
- Assess supply chain impact, relationships and partners, just-in-time delivery of goods and services, warehousing and other logistics.
- Develop contingency plans to address lack of critical services and delivery of essential commodities such as chlorine for water purification, gasoline, food, and medical supplies.



Supply Chain and Delivery Networks:

For businesses, including small businesses, the impact from international and national restrictions may not be readily apparent. However, given the increasingly interconnected global economy, movement restrictions affecting raw materials, manufacturers, wholesalers, consolidators, and retailers will have immediate negative outcomes.

Source: www.ready.gov/business/plan/influenza.html



PLAN FOR THE IMPACT OF A PANDEMIC ON YOUR BUSINESS

Create a Team Approach to Protect Your Business

- Identify a pandemic coordinator and/or team with defined roles and responsibilities.
- Identify essential employees and other critical inputs (e.g. raw materials, suppliers, sub-contractor services/products, and logistics) required to maintain business operations by location and function.
- Plan for scenarios likely to result in an increase or decrease in demand for your products or services.
- Have an emergency communications plan and revise periodically. Include identification of key contacts (with back-ups), chain of communications (including suppliers and customers), and processes for tracking and communicating business and employee status.



Protecting your Employees and Customers

- Identify employees and key customers with special needs. Add the requirements into your plan (e.g., single-parent households, elderly care givers, family members with special medical needs, animals).
- Forecast and allow for employee absences during a pandemic due to factors such as personal illness, family member illness, quarantines, school, business and public transportation closures.
- Ask if your employees have traveled overseas or in a pandemic area.
- Know what to do if a sick employee reports to work.

CREATING RESOURCES TO CARE

Train and Prepare

- Train and prepare additional workforce (e.g. contractors, employees, retirees) to perform other jobs. Cross-train your employees.
- Figure out what jobs need to be trained ahead of time.
- A simple training exercise is to select 40% of employees at random and see how your business would function without those.
- Participate in county or industry exercises and training.

Source: Roche Pandemic Planning Toolkit: www.pandemictoolkit.com



Find up-to-date pandemic information from community public health, emergency management, and other sources and make sustainable links:

- www.doh.dc.gov/flu
- www.flu.gov
- www.cdc.gov/business



BUSINESS PANDEMIC FLU PLANNING CHECKLIST

When planning for pandemic flu, businesses will play a key role in protecting employees' health and safety as well as limiting the negative impact to the economy and society. Planning for pandemic flu is critical.

To assist you in your efforts, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have developed the following checklist for businesses. It identifies important, specific activities businesses can do now to prepare, many of which will also help you in other emergencies.

Further information can be found at www.flu.gov and www.cdc.gov/business.

1.1 Plan for the impact of a pandemic on your business:

Completed In Progress Not Started

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify a pandemic coordinator and/or team with defined roles and responsibilities for preparedness and response planning. The planning process should include input from labor representatives.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify essential employees and other critical inputs (e.g. raw materials, suppliers, sub-contractor services/products, and logistics) required to maintain business operations by location and function during a pandemic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Train and prepare ancillary workforce (e.g. contractors, employees in other job titles/descriptions, retirees).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop and plan for scenarios likely to result in an increase or decrease in demand for your products and/or services during a pandemic (e.g. effect of restriction on mass gatherings, need for hygiene supplies).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine potential impact of a pandemic on company business financials using multiple possible scenarios that affect different product lines and/or production sites.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine potential impact of a pandemic on business-related domestic and international travel (e.g. quarantines, border closures).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Find up-to-date, reliable pandemic information from community public health, emergency management, and other sources and make sustainable links.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish an emergency communications plan and revise periodically. This plan includes identification of key contacts (with back-ups), chain of communications (including suppliers and customers), and processes for tracking and communicating business and employee status.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Implement an exercise/drill to test your plan, and revise periodically.

1.2 Plan for the impact of a pandemic on your employees and customers:

Completed In Progress Not Started

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Forecast and allow for employee absences during a pandemic due to factors such as personal illness, family member illness, community containment measures and quarantines, school and/or business closures, and public transportation closures.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Implement guidelines to modify the frequency and type of face-to-face contact (e.g. hand-shaking, seating in meetings, office layout, shared workstations) among employees and between employees and customers (refer to CDC recommendations).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Encourage and track annual flu vaccination for employees.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evaluate employee access to and availability of healthcare services during a pandemic, and improve services as needed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Evaluate employee access to and availability of mental health and social services during a pandemic, including corporate, community, and faith-based resources, and improve services as needed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify employees and key customers with special needs, and incorporate the requirements of such persons into your preparedness plan.

1.3 Establish policies to be implemented during a pandemic:

Completed In Progress Not Started

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish policies for employee compensation and sick-leave absences unique to a pandemic (e.g. non-punitive, liberal leave), including policies on when a previously ill person is no longer infectious and can return to work after illness.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish policies for flexible worksite (e.g. telecommuting) and flexible work hours (e.g. staggered shifts).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish policies for preventing pandemic flu spread at the worksite (e.g. promoting respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette, and prompt exclusion of people with flu symptoms).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish policies for employees who have been exposed to pandemic flu, are suspected to be ill, or become ill at the worksite (e.g. infection control response, immediate mandatory sick leave).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish policies for restricting travel to affected geographic areas (consider both domestic and international sites), evacuating employees working in or near an affected area when an outbreak begins, and guidance for employees returning from affected areas (refer to CDC travel recommendations).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Set up authorities, triggers, and procedures for activating and terminating the company's response plan, altering business operations (e.g. shutting down operations in affected areas), and transferring business knowledge to key employees.

1.4 Allocate resources to protect your employees and customers during a pandemic:

Completed In Progress Not Started

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide sufficient and accessible infection control supplies (e.g. hand-hygiene products, tissues and receptacles for their disposal) in all business locations.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enhance communications and information technology infrastructures as needed to support employee telecommuting and remote customer access.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure availability of medical consultation and advice for emergency response.

1.5 Communicate to and educate your employees:

Completed In Progress Not Started

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop and disseminate programs and materials covering pandemic fundamentals (e.g. signs and symptoms of the flu, modes of transmission), personal and family protection and response strategies (e.g. hand hygiene, coughing/sneezing etiquette, contingency plans).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Anticipate employee fear and anxiety, rumors and misinformation and plan communications accordingly.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that communications are culturally and linguistically appropriate.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disseminate information to employees about your pandemic preparedness and response plan.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide information for the at-home care of ill employees and family members.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop platforms (e.g. hotlines, dedicated Web Sites) for communicating pandemic status and actions to employees, vendors, suppliers, and customers inside and outside the worksite in a consistent and timely way, including redundancies in the emergency contact system.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify community sources for timely and accurate pandemic information (domestic and international) and resources for obtaining counter-measures (e.g. vaccines and antivirals).

1.6 Coordinate with external organizations and help your community:

Completed In Progress Not Started

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Collaborate with insurers, health plans, and major local healthcare facilities to share your pandemic plans and understand their capabilities and plans.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Collaborate with federal, state, and local public health agencies and/or emergency responders to participate in their planning processes, share your pandemic plans, and understand their capabilities and plans.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communicate with local and/or state public health agencies and/or emergency responders about the assets and/or services your business could contribute to the community.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Share best practices with other businesses in your communities, chambers of commerce, and associations to improve community response efforts.



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